

## **Polyamory as the cat in the bag**

Notes prepared by Andrew Gryf Paterson, for Ckster Festival, Bern CH, 11th March 2017.

This session opens for discussion the relationship between polyamory—the maintaining of multiple caring, intimate, and love relations, physical or conceptual—and the flexible, multi-project work of artistic and cultural production which involves more than one other. If one accepts that love is often a motivator for many intensive and intimate exchanges with another collaborator, be it a particular site, community, persons human or non-human, over time.. And that one may be juggling several ongoing commitments in parallel.. Maybe Polyamory is something we should discuss more..

<https://ckster.org/event/polyamory-as-the-cat-in-the-bag/>

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Notes:

- Not knowing something is a good start for cultural production
- Aim to not make presentation but to guide discussion
- Polyamory as increasing considered approach, but arguably still marginal.
- Historical and more contemporary references, but rather discussions based on experience
- 2nd person statements to encourage discussion
- Gender neutral, inclusive of Hetero, LGBTQIA positions

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36 Different statements were chosen for the event. They are numbered below in the order of them being written onto cards.

### **Juggling different humans**

- ★ Friends
- ★ Family
- ★ Lovers
- ★ Collaborative partners
- ★ Colleagues
- ★

4. You propose a collaboration with someone you are attracted to on multiple levels

5. You didn't elaborate all aspects of your attraction when you spoke of motivations

You have been married almost 20 years and work in the same institutional department

6. You finally got published together after many times of loving sex with each other

7. You share share project folder and body fluids with more than one at the same time

8. You started sharing books and then shared a bed together

11. You spend more time participating with community projects than with your romantic partner

12. You never realised your socially-engaged work would negatively affect your significant others

Your children's craft work takes place at home and in the temporary work-project

9. You express your love and care with refugee protesters in the camp

10. You use love emoticons online all the the time promoting friends lives

13. You can say 'I love you' in many languages as a result of your travels

14. You got involved in a project together and fell in love, even though they were with another

15. You choose not to take your passionate professional interests any further

17. You like to maintain a relationship with another human being that you can't control

16. You can say someone is primary and another secondary, third

18. You are no longer with your primary but you can't imagine another

### **Nomadic love & care**

- ★ Nomadic returns
- ★ Multiple-bases
- ★ City and countryside lives
- ★

24. You return to same places as sweet intimacies accumulate over months & years

19. You have close friendships and projects in each place you go

20. You have an actual or imaginary lover at your different residencies

You have a close collaboration in one location, and another in another location

22. You have daily chats online with several to 'keep in touch'

21. You love what your project partner shares with you

23. You have two types of care: urban and rural

### **Self-love-care-iterations**

- ★ Past and future selves
- ★

25. You offer yourself to another different from how you did in the past

26. You offer yourself to another different from how you will do so in the future

You tell stories about your past relationships selectively

You don't keep in touch with collaborators where it failed

You don't keep in contact with past lovers where it went bad

You care intensively about how you look or sound online

28. You care about the traces you leave behind

27. You are in deep collaboration with your own body (organs, parts, cells and/or bacteria)

### **Non-human persons**

- ★ Parrots: They will destroy everything you love, but you must love them for keeping you in check with chaos.
- ★ Robots, AI machines, devices, internet
- ★ Microbiome, bacteria, viruses
- ★ Horses
- ★ Worms, insects
- ★ Cats, dogs
- ★ Stones
- ★ Trees
- ★ Rivers
- ★ Mountains

1. Your laptop is your significant other

You access the Internet to mediate your online friendships using work time

29. You have your hands on your mobile-device more than any warm-blooded one

3. You know your love birds will destroy everything you care about, reminding you of chaos

30. You like to maintain a relationship with an animal that you can't control

You take selfies with worms and/or insects others often don't appreciate

35. You love and have sex in cooperation with your (micro) biome

31. You go with your gut instinct knowing you might not be responsible for it

32. You are emotionally satisfied with you cat

33. You and your dog self-identify as companion species

34. You dance regularly in communion with a tree

2. You and your mountain are especially entwined.

36. A machine is involved in your sex life